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WASHO-NORTHERN PAIUTE PEYOTISM

A Study in Acculturation

BY
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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Peyote Plant

Peyote (*Lophophora williamsii* Lemaire), a small, spineless cactus, grows from a carrotlike root. Its hemispherical top surface, grayish green in color, shows an inch or two aboveground and is divided into small segments. From each segment protrudes a minute tuft of hairlike fibers which in the depressed center of the top have the appearance of matted fuzz. Although all parts of the plant are at times used, the dome-shaped top is usually cut (leaving the root to send out small new shoots) to become the "peyote button" when dried.

Since the natural habitat of the peyote cactus is limited to the valley of the Rio Grande below Deming, New Mexico, and the plateau desert country of northeastern Mexico, Indians must travel to this area or have the dried buttons shipped to them. The vicinity of Laredo, Texas, is the principal source of supply for Indians in the United States.

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Numerous chemical analyses have been made of peyote, revealing in young plants a single alkaloid, Pellotine ($C_{12}H_{19}O_3N$); in mature plants up to nine: Anhaline ($C_{10}H_{15}ON$), Anhalamine ($C_{11}H_{13}O_3N$), Mescaline ($C_{11}H_{17}O_3N$), Anhalonidine ($C_{12}H_{17}O_3N$), Anhalonine ($C_{12}H_{15}O_3N$), Lophophorine ($C_{12}H_{17}O_3N$), Pellotine, Anhalinine, and Anhalidine. Lophophorine is an oily, colorless liquid; the other alkaloids can be crystallized. These alkaloids fall into two classes, the strychnine-like and the morphinelike, somewhat antagonistic in action, which might account for the different stages of intoxication experienced. Different chemical composition of plants and opposing action of alkaloids, plus variations in susceptibility of the individual users, complicate the physiological problems connected with peyote eating.[1]

Most scientific investigators have pronounced peyote both non-habit-forming and innocuous as generally used, yet they have not found it of real therapeutic value. The euphoria it produces, judging from controlled clinical experiments[2] and native testimony, is usually accompanied by a preliminary feeling of exhilaration followed by a state of lassitude, without, however, inducing sleep. In this latter condition, it is often impossible to resist the impulse to vomit, without being followed, however, by sickness. Sensory hallucinations, especially visual, usually accompany the secondary stages of intoxication. More often seen with the eyes closed, the visions are extremely variable and unpredictable, but color hallucinations are most common.

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The early Spanish explorers in Mexico observed the ceremonial use of peyote and mentioned its intoxicating property. Sahagun in 1560 was the first to write about peyote, and Hernandez in 1638 described it botanically. Hijar y Haro (p. 687) lists fourteen authors who wrote of peyote in Mexico before 1800. From 1894 to 1902, Lumholtz gave the first modern ethnographic accounts of its use in Mexico among the Huichol and Tarahumara. At about the same time, Mooney published

[1] Summarized from La Barre, 139–140. [2] Guttmann, 1936, 203–221.

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short accounts on the Kiowa peyote cult in Oklahoma, which is the first notice we have of its presence among extant tribes in the United States.[4] Since then, it has received the attention of numerous ethnographers, chemists, physiologists, and psychologists; it was the subject of a doctoral dissertation by Vincenzo Petrullo in 1934 and by Weston La Barre at Yale in 1937.

Similarities between the cults in Mexico and the United States suggest some remote relationship, but numerous differences invalidate any theory of recent direct diffusion. Since modern peyotists in Mexico and the United States are separated by the entire peyote-growing area, both probably learned to use the cactus from peoples formerly living within the peyote's natural habitat. The presence of peyote users in the area of northeastern Mexico during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is well documented,[5] as is the fact that Lipan and Mescalero Apache visited them and used peyote with them as early as 1770.[6] The Apache attended peyote meetings and probably Catholic services while at the Coahuila missions and might easily have formed a new ritual when they returned to the United States, incorporating into it elements from any or all the ceremonies they witnessed while in Mexico. All peyote rituals north of the Rio Grande are remarkably similar, and appear universally to include elements of Christian ideology and ritual integrated with aboriginal ceremonial elements.[7]

The spread of the peyote cult is well known throughout the Plains from the Mescalero and Kiowa who had it by 1870 and 1880 to the Chippewa in Canada by 1936.[8] Shonle thought the Rocky Mountains would act as an effective barrier to its spread to the tribes in Idaho and California; however, it has been at Fort Hall and among scattered groups of Ute, Goshute, and Shoshone in the Great Basin for over a decade. This paper is concerned with its introduction among the Northern Paiute and Washo Indians of western Nevada and eastern California.

Ideology of Peyotism

In spite of recognized differences in the cults of various tribes, peyotism is sufficiently uniform everywhere in the United States to permit a single general description. The purpose of the cult is to heal and to protect through the worship of God by means of peyote. It is almost impossible to distinguish the Supreme Being of peyotism from the Christian God. Peyote serves as an intermediary between the devotee and the Divinity, and as such has addressed to it all supplications. The dried peyote button has infinite aspects and attributes. The exact relationship between peyote as an incorporeal intermediary, as a palladium, as a corporeal fetish, and as a dried cactus to be eaten, is not easily understood. Probably very few peyotists have ever attempted to formulate the integration of peyote's several attributes, thinking and speaking of it as a "medicine," a "power," a "protector," or a "teacher," praying to it as the symbol or representative of a spirit or God, and eating it as an aid to obtaining assistance from, or offering thanks to, the Supreme Divinity. Distinct theologies of peyotism would be about as numerous as the individuals supplying them; but in spite of variance in esoteric concepts, common beliefs are uniform. Universally, alcoholic beverages are condemned by peyotists; and love, hope, charity, ambition, and honesty are considered necessary for happiness.

[4] La Barre, 1938, reviews nearly all of the scientific and historical literature on peyote and gives a thirteen-page bibliography.

[5] Beals, 1932, 216.

[6] Antonio Pena, 1770, MS; Juan de Ugalde, 1787, MS; also Stewart, MS.

[7] Radin, Opler, Petrullo, La Barre, and others consider Christian elements recent additions. Evidence to the contrary is presented in my Ute Peyotism (see Bibliography).

[8] La Barre, 1938, 109–122; Shonle, 1925, 58.

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may suffice to distort the impressions of a cult or cause it to be overlooked entirely is demonstrated by the fact that both Park, in 1934 and 1935, and I, in 1936, failed to learn that the peyote cult had been present in 1930 among the Northern Paiute. Even after discovering the cult's previous existence, I obtained fragmentary and contradictory information concerning it. One impression was received from a man at Nixon, another from a woman at Bishop, about two hundred miles away, a third from Indians at Fallon and at Walker River; all had to be interviewed before even the semblance of a true picture emerged.

To account for the acceptance of new cults, previous students have pointed out the similarities between the indigenous and the introduced religion. When native institutions are investigated years after their establishment, a cultural analysis is perhaps the only means of obtaining clues to the reasons for acceptance. Occasionally, however, faith in such analysis has led ethnographers to rely on it when more exact data were available. That the indigenous culture influences acceptance or rejection cannot be denied, but when Indians participating in the same culture react differently toward new cults, it is necessary to search for additional factors.

Recognizing the sources of error in studying the diffusion of a religion after it has become well established, I was impressed with the opportunity, rare in the United States, to investigate the Washo-Paiute peyote cult only two years after its introduction and with nearly all the participants available for questioning. From the first interview it was clear that the Washo–Northern Paiute Indians were sharply divided in their opinions concerning peyote; consequently, it was necessary to go beyond a cultural analysis.

It was difficult to obtain accurate figures on participation. Several times I was told that "nearly everyone" in a certain Indian community belonged, only to find upon visiting that place that this held for a very small percentage. To get correct data, I copied from the official government census rolls the names of all adults (fifteen years of age and over) from the principal communities where meetings have been held. I checked the roll, name by name, with peyotists, nonpeyotists, government employees, and other white men to ascertain the status of each individual. In interviews with members and nonmembers in these communities, I always inquired for other peyote members and for those most opposed to it. From nearly every family in Dresslerville, Wellington, Yerington (including Campbell Ranch) Mono Lake, Bridgeport, and Coleville I interviewed at least one member. I also obtained the names of all families represented at two peyote meetings I attended: at Mono Lake in July, 1938, and at Carson City, October, 1938. In all, I procured information concerning peyotism from 43 active peyotists, 31 apathetical inactive peyotists, 18 antagonistic inactive peyotists, 35 unconcerned nonpeyotists, 56 antagonistic nonpeyotists, and 32 Indian Service officials, missionaries, ranchers, merchants, and other white men somehow directly concerned with the Indians. These 215 interviews varied from statements such as "I don't know anything about peyote and I don't care to know" to an interview with proselyter Ben Lancaster which lasted four days.

HISTORY OF WASHO–NORTHERN PAIUTE PEYOTISM

First Contacts

The Peyote religion was introduced to the Washo and the Northern Paiute Indians in October, 1936, by Ben Lancaster. Contrary to the belief general among ethnologists and Indian Service employees that this is their first experience with

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000 regions outside their recognized territory.

132 Winter temperatures can be extreme in the Honey Lake area with temperatures occasionally falling as low as -20°F in the vicinity of the winter villages of the Wadátkuht. Summer temperatures can exceed 100°F for short periods. Fields of snow often remain on the crest of the Sierra until June, occasionally until August, and snow can be heavy on the valley floor in the winter. Also in the winter Honey Lake Valley may be filled with a dense fog which will remain for several weeks. This same fog shrouded area in the summer, particularly around Honey Lake, may be subjected to choking, blinding dust storms of considerable magnitude. Despite this [137] seemingly harsh environment the Wadátkuht were very fortunate [133] to have groves of oak trees within their territory. They also were fortunate to have Honey Lake and the network of swamps and sloughs of Susan River which attracted myriads of waterfowl to nest and feed. The Wadátkuht environment could be harsh, but it could also be bountiful.

THE HISTORIC PERIOD

175 The date of first contact by Europeans with the Honey [174] Lake Paiute may never be known with any exactness, but it can be assumed that some knowledge of the whites had been obtained by the last quarter of the 18th century. The existence of the Spanish after their founding of the mission at what is now San Francisco in 1776 was certainly known to Indian groups even as remote as the Honey Lake Paiute. Visits by Europeans into the general region are recorded as first having occurred in 1829 when Peter Skene Ogden made a trip west from Salt Lake to northwestern Nevada in that year. In 1830 he traveled from the Columbia River to the Colorado River on a route which lay to the east of the Sierra Nevada. His exact route is not known but it may have been through Nevada rather than in California along the east margin of the Sierra Nevada (Elliott, 1920). There can be little doubt that activities such as his were soon known to all groups neighboring the areas of penetration. It is thus probable that the Honey Lake people had heard rumors and tales of the white people for many years before they actually saw them. In fact, the coming of the whites was "foreseen" by Sanezha wahits, an old shaman. He sang for four or five nights and told the Honey Lake people that something was coming to their country, and that "some- [787] thing" was a white-skinned people. Because of this prediction the Wadátkuht were not too surprised to see the first white

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people. The first group that they saw was composed of soldiers (sic), of whom they were afraid. [75]

At the end of 1843 and the beginning of 1844 Fremont made a reconnaissance trip from Oregon through Nevada and became the first recorded white man to visit Pyramid Lake (Fremont, 1846). His description of the region and the people is relatively detailed and his visit was surely known to the Honey Lake people since they are closely related neighbors of the Pyramid Lake Paiute. [101]

It was not until 1850, however, that there is any record of actual penetration of Honey Lake Valley by Europeans. In this year Peter Lassen made two trips to this large lake lying just east of the Sierra Nevada in what is now northeastern California. On his second trip he was accompanied by J. Goldsborough Bruff and a group of other men. Bruff was a trained topographer with a curiosity, an appreciation of what he observed and a keen ability for describing his experiences. It is unfortunate that on his trip to Honey Lake he did not have his topographic instruments with him and thus able to make accurate day-by-day locations. Because of the lack of proper instruments it is scarcely possible to trace the party's route with accuracy. His verbal descriptions and his pen and pencil sketches made on the trip, however, are of considerable historical value and interest.

Read and Gaines (1949) have attempted a reconstruction of Bruff's route to Honey Lake but it is not entirely satisfactory. As the party neared Honey Lake, however, their position is more readily apparent. They originally left Lassen's ranch on Deer Creek near its junction with the Sacramento River and proceeded up the creek to its headwaters. They then rode east to the headwaters of the Feather River on the Lassen Trail. They followed this trail north approximately to a point where it meets the Pit River and then apparently branched off toward the north and east to cross Big Valley in Achomawi territory. From Big Valley they seem to have gone to the general area of the present town of Alturas, Modoc County, and then proceeded in a south and east direction, eventually reaching Honey Lake. The "hieroglyphic defile" of which he speaks is a section of the upper reaches of Smoke Creek, just south of Observation Peak and east of Shinn Peak, between Wagontree and Sagebrush Springs. All along the way they saw abundant evidence of Indians, and occasionally the Indians themselves. However, they were generally hostile and Bruff nearly lost his life while exploring a volcanic cone. [114]

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175 Arrows discharged at him and a friend from a distance of about 100 yards stuck the ground a few feet from them. Read and Gaines suggest that the volcanic cone was McDonald Peak, but the evidence is not entirely convincing. It can be assumed, however, that from about the time the party left this camp near the volcanic peak on September 30, 1850, they were in territory claimed by the Wadátkuht Paiute, having just left Achomawi territory. On October 2, 1850, the party camped on the north side of Shaffer Peak (Atsá kaduhkᵂ, "Red Mountain"), which has an elevation of 5,864 feet above sea level. They remained at this camp through the 3rd of October and on the following day went around the east side of the peak to descend into Honey Lake Valley. On the night of the 4th they camped on one of the branches of the Susan River (apparently in the vicinity of where the town of Standish is now located), and on the following day went a few miles to the northwest end of the lake where they stopped for lunch and rest. That morning before they left camp they were visited by an old man and a young man who were armed with bows and arrows. Bruff made a sketch of the old man as he sat near the fire (Read and Gaines, 1949, p. 553).

At their lunch stop at the northwest end of the lake, Bruff made a sketch of Honey Lake and the Hot Springs Mountains (ibid., pp. 545-555). In the afternoon the party left the Honey Lake Valley and entered the Sierra Nevada on their return to the Sacramento Valley.

In 1853, Isaac Roop came to Honey Lake Valley to establish himself as the valley's first permanent white resident. The present town of Susanville, where Roop claimed land, was eventually named after his daughter Susan (Fairfield, 1916). As Lassen's Trail fell into disrepute, emigrant movement slackened, but with the establishment of Noble's Road the movement of settlers into northern California again began to increase. The Noble Road, established in 1852, branched off the Lassen-Applegate Trail where the latter turned north in the Nevada desert. The Noble Road crossed the Smoke Creek Desert and passed through Honey Lake Valley. It reached the Sacramento River in the vicinity of the present city of Redding after passing by the north side of Lassen Peak.

175 648 The whites of Honey Lake Valley are reported to have made a treaty with the Paiutes (not just the local band but those of Pyramid Lake) (ibid., p. 82). Both sides observed the truce for several years and there was a friendly social

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and economic intercourse between both peoples in which the Indians traded furs and game for clothing and other desirable objects. The Pit River Indians, however, were early recognized by the whites as being dangerous and provocative and the settlers were always on guard against their depredations. In fact, the whites went into the Pit River territory on a number of occasions in force to carry the fight to these Indians in retaliation for both real and imaginary abuses. It was inevitable, however, that the Paiutes, too, would become alienated from the settlers and launch a campaign of resistance to last for several decades. Warfare between the whites and the Paiutes consisted of intermittent raids on one another's holdings and establishments. The Indians were primarily interested in driving off or killing the settler's livestock to get food and riding horses. The whites, interested in maintaining their holdings, would raid Indian camps and villages (often at dawn) and kill as many men as they could and destroy all the provisions the Indians had. Probably one of the greatest threats to the peace of mind of the Honey Lake Valley settlers was the gathering together of the Paiutes at Pyramid Lake upon the reservation. Both in theory and in actuality this banding together of Paiutes provided the Indians with a relatively strong force of mounted warriors which, if not controlled, possibly could have wiped out the young settlement. For many years the white settlers of Honey Lake Valley lived in apprehension of Indian attacks.

> "In Honey Lake Valley the military defense was never permanent. When trouble with the Indians arose, troops were dispatched from the neighboring military posts of Fort Crook, Fort Bidwell, and Fort Churchill, Nevada. Sometimes military posts were established and patrols maintained over a period of several months, but Honey Lake Valley was always considered 'as in the field', its defenses operating only on an emergency basis. The protection of the area rested chiefly upon the settlers themselves" (Davis, n.d., p. 66).

> "As Indian hostility lessened in the vicinity of Honey Lake, military activity diminished. Patrols and scouts, however, were continued for many years" (ibid., p. 75).

> "But by 1880 the work of the military post was behind it. Cooperation and assimilation had replaced conflict and isolation. The struggle between native and new comer was over" (ibid., p. 80).

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From about 1880 on the Honey Lake Paiute began increasingly to work as agricultural and domestic laborers for the white settlers, but pursued their old way of life in a modified form. The hunting and gathering cycles of pre-contact times was modified to include seasonal work on the ranches, primarily centered about haying. Many traditional camps and villages were abandoned due to a decrease in population and in order to take advantage of closer contact with particular ranchers from whom the Indians could receive certain benefits. A glimpse of this post-contact type of settlement pattern is given in a following section.

According to Kitty Joaquin the Maidu people were anxious to have peaceful relations with the white people and urged the Paiutes to follow the same policy. The Paiute people, however, distrusted and feared the white people (tai'bo'^{o}) who were coming into their country. They wanted to be rid of these strangers. The first (sic) group of white men were soldiers who camped in a draw low on the mountain slope between Litchfield and the Gibson ranch which is located several miles east of Litchfield. As there is a spring in that locality it was a good place to camp.

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Kitty stated that the soldiers gave the Indians soap, flour, canned milk, tomato sauce, clothes and shoes. The Indians used the soap to make soup and put the muskmelons into the earth oven to cook. Kitty could not help but laugh as she told of the unsatisfactory results of both these experiments.

A short time after the white people came to Honey Lake Valley a band of Wadátkuht people, including Joaquin (Kitty's father), was on a hunting trip to Eagle Lake (Kitty stated on another occasion that they had gone to the lake to escape the soldiers). A group of soldiers, augmented by a number of Maidu men, were also in the vicinity. Hog-die Jim (Kwiduhm muhtsuad^{a}..."Feces to wipe"), Joaquin's uncle, was afraid that the soldiers and the Maidu would attack the Wadátkuht camp so advised Joaquin and the others to move their camp. Joaquin, however, felt that there was no real danger so was not willing to move camp. Hog-die Jim then took the dried meat, a rabbit skin blanket and all the horses and left.

The soldiers and the Maidu attacked Joaquin's camp and killed everyone except a baby in a cradle board, two women who jumped into the lake and swam to safety, a half-grown girl, and Joaquin. Joaquin, too, jumped into the lake to

escape, but while in the water he was shot through the body by a soldier, John Mulroney. Killed at this time was Joaquin's brother. Joaquin escaped and was cared for by the others who had gotten away. For the remainder of his long life Joaquin felt bitterness toward the whites and the Maidu. 175 648.

Upon another occasion soldiers captured two Paiute men at a place on Susan River called Wutsono ihd (called this because of the whirlpool found there). This place is now called Soldier Bridge and is about one mile west of Litchfield where the old highway used to cross the river. The relatives never learned what happened to these two men as they were never seen again.

Incidences such as those just related provide testimony from the Indians that contact between the settlers and the Indians was not always peaceful. The Indians coveted the settlers' livestock and other possessions, and the whites wanted the Indians' homeland.

BOUNDARIES AND POPULATION

The boundaries between native groups, both in California and the Great Basin, can seldom be regarded as we regard our own well-defined political boundaries. If one is able to get precise boundary locations from informants of one group he will usually find that these boundaries do not always coincide with those accepted by a neighboring group. The boundary lines given in this work of necessity must be somewhat arbitrary. Decisions for the location of the Wadátkuht boundaries are based on several factors. The names and locations of Wadátkuht camps and villages are of prime importance in deciding whether a certain area belongs to the Wadátkuht or to some other group. It was on just such evidence, a village name, that I have placed the Horse Lake area into Wadátkuht territory. In doing this I find that I am in agreement with Merriam (1926) but not with Kniffen (1928). In all fairness, however, it must be stated that the Pit River people regularly visited Horse Lake, which agrees with Kniffen's statement. Another criterion for my locations of Wadátkuht boundaries is the statement of my informants who were able to precisely differentiate between their territory and that of their neighbors. Accepting these statements uncritically, however, involves an element of danger because an informant occasionally would dogmatically state that some area or physiographic feature belonged to his group, yet be unable to substantiate 13 114 115

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Contact and Occupation

The initial contacts between white men and the Indians of western Nevada were sporadic and appear to have had little effect on the culture of the indigenous peoples.

To what extent either the Paiute or the Washo were aware of white men prior to first contact is unclear. It seems highly probable that the Washo had experienced some effects from the Spanish colonization of California. Certainly trips to the coast for shellfish were fraught with more uncertainty once the Spanish began forcible collection of Indians for missionization. One suspects that in the period immediately preceding direct white contact, groups such as the Ute may have been active in the Basin, taking slaves for the Spanish in the Southwest, which might have contributed to the initial shyness of Basin groups when confronted with white men.

From the 1820's until the 1840's a number of expeditions -- mainly fur hunters exploring new territory or on their way to winter in California -- entered western Nevada. According to Steward (1938, 6) Ogden probably visited the Humboldt River area between 1826 and 1828. The famous mountain man Jedediah Smith crossed Nevada in 1825. Bonneville pushed as far as Pyramid Lake in 1833, and Walker was in that portion of Nevada by 1833 (Steward, 1938, 6). If we are to judge from the nearly complete lack of information, these people had little or no contact with the Indians of the area.

Even in later peiods the Indians of the Basin were given little attention by travelers. Nearly naked, digging for roots, often starving in the winter, with no shelter save brush houses and with almost no tools or accoutrements, they were contemptuously lumped together as "Diggers" and ignored. Early writers, travelers and officials tended to distinguish between those Indians who rode horses and those who didn't, the former being "Snakes" or "Shoshonis," and the latter "Diggers." Upon reading the descriptions of the condition of these peoples one is led to suspect that at least some of the anthropological thinking about the Basin has been colored by a second-hand ethnocentrism. Early writers simply concluded that anyone willing to eat grubs, snakes, grasshoppers and roots must indeed be in the last extremities.

The 1840's mark a second and different phase of white-Indian contact in this area. Immigration into the west began to increase, and the route down the Humboldt and over the Sierras in the vicinity of Walker Pass, and occasionally Donner Pass, brought a number of trains directly through the territory of the Washo and the Paiute.

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Two reactions appear common to both groups. One is avoidance; Washo tradition tells of watching wagon trains from hiding. Similar evidence from the Paiute supports the notion that they too were unwilling to associate with the travelers.

The second aspect of contact behavior was that of exploitation. The Paiute and Shoshoni in particular found wagon train livestock excellent sources of food. A hidden hunter would shoot several arrows into a straggling horse or cow and flee before he was located by the white men. After waiting until the white men were well out of the area the Indians would descend on the wounded animal, which, of course, had to be left by the travelers.[2] The Washo report that their first view of a cow was when they found one strayed from a wagon train. They packed the animal, rode it, generally examined it, and eventually killed and ate it. This suggests that the Washo had been watching passing wagon trains or had in other ways learned about riding and packing (Lowie, 1939, 302).

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The 1850's marked still another phase of the contact situation, that of permanent occupation. The wagon routes provided incentive to establish posts in eastern Nevada, and one was set up in Eagle Valley in the 1850's. Prior to 1852 a man named Clark had set up a ranch in Carson Valley. This he abandoned in fear after he killed an Indian, probably a Washo. In 1853 another family occupied the Clark Ranch. When a group of Indians -- again apparently Washo -- appeared demanding food, the householder shot one of their number (Angel, 1958, 145-9). I am inclined to think that the hostile intent of the Indians was small and that they were begging food in a manner that became common in later years. This suggests that the Indians viewed the apparently bountiful supplies of the white man as simply another source to be exploited by gathering (i. e., begging). In addition it reveals a distinct conflict in cultural attitudes. Sharing among these peoples was a common characteristic. It appears that in hard times there was no obligation to feed a visitor, but asking for food was certainly not considered a violation of norms.

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Between 1849 and 1851 Mormon colonists, sent out from Utah, established an agricultural community at Genoa. It appears that during this period Washo Indians established settlements around white habitations, utilizing the trash heaps as a source of food and building materials, and receiving handouts in return for odd jobs. An important unanswered question is whether the population of these settlements was permanent. I suspect that although the settlements remained at approximately the same population level there was a great deal of moving in and out by individual families going to other parts of Washo territory to hunt or gather. Estimates of Washo population appear to have been generally very low and often based on the

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2. I am indebted to Professor R. F. Murphy for information concerning Basin Indian "hunting" of wagon train stock (see also Angel, 1958, 145-9).

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number of people living in these settlements (Mooney, 1896; Kroeber, 1925). It is at least possible that a great many Washo lived in the mountains and other areas not generally visited by white men and went unnoticed.

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The year 1857 marks the discovery of the Comstock Lode and a dramatic change in the history of Nevada and of the indigenous populations. The primary activity of the white man shifted from a rather casual form of frontier pastoralism to an intensive exploitation of the mountains for silver and gold. Mining and the servicing of mining populations became the primary occupation. The flamboyant history of the Comstock has overshadowed the other activities of white men in the area at the time. Perhaps of equal importance to the study at hand is the rapid increase of stock raising.

Angel (1958, 67) reports that 10,000 head of cattle, horses and hogs were pastured in the general western Nevada area in 1860. The poor condition of the animals and the number of carcasses seen on the range is mentioned. This would suggest that the range was subjected to rather serious overgrazing, which must have depleted the grass and brush seed food sources of the Indians, as had Mormon ranching in Utah (Steward, 1938, 14). It is probable that the Paiute suffered more from this than did the Washo.

The Humboldt and Pyramid Lake region lies largely in the Artemisian life zone, which is characterized by xerophytic plants and few grasses or other possible food sources except after relatively heavy rains, or along the margins of watercourses and lakes. Since there are three large bodies of water and three rivers in the area we can assume that the Indians drew much of their sustenance from the edges of the water. Cattle would, of course, seek out the same areas and drastically reduce the supply. Moreover, Indians report that many areas now covered with useless plants were grasslands prior to the introduction of cattle or other livestock (Steward, 1938, 17). Even light grazing in such an area would seriously deplete, if not totally destroy, the food sources of the area. It is obvious that Indians occupying the area during their annual food circuit would be forced to move or make adjustments to the changed conditions. Judging from the population density figures for this area, the migration cycle may not have been too extensive, centering around the three lakes and the river banks, and shifting markedly only in the fall for pinenut harvests. The sudden introduction of cattle would have seriously upset the ecology. It is significant that the Paiute of this area were among the first to begin raiding white herds and habitations.

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The Washo, on the other hand, lived in a territory that comprised four life zones, Alpine, Aspen, Pinyon and Artemisian. A depletion in the Artemisian zone due to grazing might be partially compensated by greater dependence on other life zone sources and by utilization of white settlements as a food source.

as a food source. It is possible that the Washo did not rely as much on the Artemisian sources and therefore were not as seriously discomforted by cattle grazing as were the Paiutes. It is during this early period of white intrusion that we see Paiutes also becoming hangers-on around white settlements and becoming dependents of individual white ranchers (Steward, 1938, 8).

The above-described alteration of the environment is significant in terms of differential response because it operated fairly uniformly on all the Washo, while Paiutes began to experience inequalities of opportunity in various bands. This, we might postulate, could have led to new band alignments among the Paiutes as families left bands in depleted areas to join bands in more provident areas. Secondly it might lead to interband friction if entire bands attempted to operate as entities in areas where others had habitually gathered and hunted.

This period marks the first distinct differences in response to white occupation between the two groups.

The Washo apparently continued in the same patterns that they had earlier. Numbers of Washo gradually drifted into the Indian towns on the outskirts of white settlements. Others, in bands, began to reside more or less permanently on ranches, becoming dependents of individual white ranchers. In return for odd jobs and, perhaps, as a bribe to prevent theft, the Indians received handouts. Their hunting activities were appreciated by whites because they helped reduce the wild animal competition with domestic animals for grazing. An additional factor may also have been that a band of Indians made women available to cowboys and ranch hands, an important element in a woman-short frontier area.

Property lines, railroads and lumber flumes interrupted the migration trails of the Washo, upsetting the traditional band-land relationship. Although gathering and hunting continued, it appears to have lost its quality of organizing Washo life.

In the bands that squatted on the property of ranchers, women appear to have become the foci of social organization. This is probably because they were able to earn money as housekeepers, kitchen help and casual prostitutes while remaining with the family unit, but men were forced to leave the family to earn money in seasonal farm labor, lumbering, woodchopping, construction, hunting and fishing.

The 1850's mark the beginning of Paiute hostility toward the white man. Bands of mounted Paiute under the leadership of war chiefs began raiding herds, attacking outlying ranches and harassing wagon trains.

9: d'Azevedo et al. E-4,5 (1952-1961) 1963 NT20 Washo

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175 The history of the Paiute War of 1858 as presented in Angel (1958) gives some significant information about the earliest stages of this development of hostility as a response to white contact. The first raids on white horse herds and ranches appear to have been conducted by Shoshoni, part-Shoshoni or Bannock visitors among the Pyramid Lake Paiute. These interlopers were aided by a number of Paiute men but the general Paiute reaction was to make every effort to stop the raids in order to avoid trouble with the white men, the Paiutes having already learned that disputes among whites as well as between whites and Indians often led to gunplay and bloodshed. In at least one case the Paiutes murdered a Shoshoni who refused to stop his raiding (Angel, 1958, 150).

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However, the fat was in the fire after the early raids and any missing stock, whether strayed, taken by a white man or a single Indian, or actually lost to a raiding party, was credited to the Indians and punitive action was taken. Armed posses raided Indian camps in retaliation for real and fancied wrongs. The Indians began to reply in kind, and the skirmishing hostility developed into full scale war. The formation of war bands among the Paiute led to increased band size, the development of leaders with real authority and at least some interband rivalry. Definite territories became associated with particular bands and real band identity developed (Steward, 1938, 249; Stewart, 1941).

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In 1858 a volunteer regiment of miners, ranchers and citizens of the various settlements mounted an expedition against the Paiute and, as is often the case with volunteer regiments, was soundly defeated. In 1870 the Paiute were finally defeated and contained on reservations by federal troops.

177 Julian Steward (1938, 1955) has postulated that the introduction of the horse was largely responsible for the formation of what he has called composite raiding bands from a society formerly organized in bilateral hunting groups. Although the horse certainly played an important role in this development, Steward's theory leaves a number of questions unanswered. Foremost is the question of why a similar pattern failed to develop among the similarly organized Washo confronted with almost identical situations. This question is intensified when we realize that the hunting and gathering Pit River people did not adopt the horse ("because they were afraid of horses") until the late 1860's although the animal was available (de Angulo, 1950, 331). Thus, of the tribes that confronted the white man in western Nevada and eastern California, only the Paiute adopted the horse and reorganized their society into war-oriented bands.

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This fact is significant in theoretical terms and equally significant in explaining the course of acculturation in this area in the period after 1870.

northern Basin people an ecological alternative on one hand and increased the destruction of buffalo west of the Rockies on the other. Thus the horse-owning Shoshoni and Bannock pursued the bison across the divide and adapted to a life as mounted nomadic buffalo hunters. The colorful and dramatic population in the Plains may have obscured the relationships maintained between these groups and the "miserable Diggers" of the Basin. One must remember, however, that although buffalo were plentiful on the Plains the area was sparse in other food sources. The Basin offered a far wider variety of plant foods and fish as well as small game. N 177 [231]

There is ample evidence that the Shoshoni, particularly as people armed with guns entered the Plains, were forced to move westward, and spend at least part of the year in a modified Basin existence. However, these people were essentially Plains Indians in attitude and had developed the war complex, with its emphasis on personal glory, coup counting and horse raiding as well as the larger band organization needed to support military activity of this nature. For whatever reason individual Plains Indians found themselves in northern Nevada it seems completely logical that they would go on acting like Plains Indians. There were no bison to hunt, but cattle ranged widely and there were many horse herds owned by whites. Such people were probably high prestige figures among the Paiute, who were suffering from want and were without large numbers of horses. The behavior of these visitors served as a model of alternative behavior for Paiutes, who had in fact been seeking alternatives since the disappearance of the bison.

This behavior, however, presented a different picture to the white man than had the inoffensive scavenging and begging and pilfering of the pre-raiding band days. Large bands of Indians riding down on ranches, harassing wagon trains, waylaying travelers and running off stock could be viewed only as enemies. Enemies were met with force and, once defeated, were contained on reservations. N 177 648

The White Man: Culture without Society

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In discussing Paiute and Washo we have spoken of two social systems bearing distinct yet generally similar culture, and in examining the changes that took place among these peoples we have discussed both cultural and social changes. However, in speaking of the white men who entered western Nevada in the first half of the 19th century it seems that we cannot meaningfully speak of white society and its impact on the culture or society of the Indians. Certainly Jedediah Smith and Zenas Leonard were not extensions of American society nor were the hordes of rootless fortune-seekers who entered the

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country after the discovery of the Comstock Lode. Essentially these people were social fragments bearing the ideational systems of American culture. American society as a real entity ended roughly at the Mississippi River. Needless to say, these men did not exist outside the social level of human experience but formed small, often short-lived, social systems to meet the exigencies of frontier life or, as did many of the mountain men, they joined existing Indian societies. The important issue is that the culture borne by these intruders set the pattern of their social organization. When social groups formed they were created along lines directed by American norms but those lines were adjusted to fit the situation as it existed in western Nevada and were a far cry from the social lines drawn in New England or Ohio. Illustrative of the above argument is the behavior of the volunteer regiment called up by Nevada to fight the Paiute. The organization was formed of companies drawn from the various settlements in the area. In keeping with American volunteer military tradition of the 19th century each company elected its own officers. However, so fiercely did each settlement prize its independent existence that the entire regiment refused to elect a colonel and marched to war without a leader, a loose alliance of the military elements of a number of small "societies" (Angel, 1958, 153). One might suggest that the acceptance of federal troops as an agent of defense against Indians marks the inclusion of a frontier settlement in the broader framework of American society from the position of a culture-sharing social isolate. Thus, in these crucial years of white-Indian contact, what was affecting Indians was not white or American society but American culture as brought west in the minds of fur trappers, ranchers, farmers and gold seekers. This argument becomes significant if we continue our attempt to relate the behavior of the Washo and Paiute to explain the differences in white response.

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The Washo failed to take hostile action in any concerted form against the white man and are said to have voluntarily turned in their weapons during the Paiute wars to avoid being mistaken for hostiles. Others of the Washo joined the white forces as scouts. This alliance was in part a result of the Washo's -- as well as the whites' -- having suffered raids by mounted Paiutes (d'Azevedo, personal communication).

The white response to this behavior is of two sorts. First, because they were not a threat and continued to live in the manner to which the whites were accustomed to seeing them -- as dependents and squatters, day laborers and root diggers -- there appears to have been no development of a white consciousness of the Washo as a tribe or any kind of a real social unit. They were simply "Indians." A second type of reaction was that of despising Washo because they had not fought. Here we see a culturally determined attitude. Although Paiutes fought and killed white men they were responding in a way the white men felt they would act themselves. The Washo, because

they did not resist white intrusion, were viewed as less than people, cowardly, without pride and unworthy of consideration. Because the Washo failed to demonstrate their unity as a people by military action they were not considered a unit, and it was not until the last decade of the 19th century that land allotments were made for them. W 175 648

The foregoing discussion of differential responses on the part of the Indians and on the part of white men toward Indians explains in large part the differences in acculturation subsequent to 1870 when the war-like Paiute were contained on reservations. N 175 177 648

As has been pointed out, the Paiute-Plains Indian relationships may well be due to the subsistence activities the two groups had shared in the past. The relationships as of 1858 served to give the Paiute a model of alternative behavior toward the white man, a model based on Plains Indian values and attitudes.

The Washo, however, lived almost entirely outside the buffalo territory. One suspects from this situation that the environment of their area was one that had never included food sources besides those present at the time of contact. We might then say that the Washo were in ecological balance. They did not consciously or unconsciously turn toward peoples with a markedly different ecological adaptation as models of alternative behavior. This is one way of saying that the Paiute were ecologically oriented toward the north and east, and the Washo were ecologically oriented toward the west. Gathering may have been better in California and game animals more plentiful, but essentially the subsistence patterns were much the same as those of the Washo. Thus Washo peoples felt little or no influence from the Plains groups. They continued to look at the horse and cow as food animals to be eaten when possible, but saw no advantage in adopting the horse. The Washo did not totally reject the horse but accepted it only as a convenience in transportation. Many Washo eventually owned wagons and teams and rode horses but used them only within the framework of aboriginal Washo culture patterns and developed neither a new way of life based on the horse nor new values that they attached to the horse. (For a more detailed discussion of Washo response to animal husbandry and agriculture see Downs, 1961a.) N W 177 182 22

In the years subsequent to 1879 the Paiute response pattern continued to be colorful, and in many ways, effective. In the early 1870's the first Ghost Dance was initiated at Mason Valley (Gayton, 1930, 57). This early movement elicited no interest among the Plains tribes or the Washo but was adopted by the seriously disorganized California groups. Shortly after this development the Paiute began to farm both on the reservation and off. A second nativistic movement, originated under Jack Wilson at Walker Lake in N 175 177 648 668

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1890, was joined by the Basin and Plains tribes until the bloody termination of the Ghost Dance at Wounded Knee Creek. At this time, according to Mooney (1896), the Paiute were still living in brush houses with very few items of white material culture except metal pots, guns and factory clothes. However, they had adopted both livestock-keeping and farming. The Washo once again rejected the Ghost Dance and only a few individuals joined Paiute groups.

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This double rejection of nativistic movements suggests that although the Washo were often considered an almost extinct fragment of an Indian tribe, hanging around the edges of white towns, they may in fact have made what was in individual terms an adequate adjustment to white intrusion. This adjustment, rather than taking the line of changing orientations displayed by the Paiute appears to have been of a continuous attempt to take advantage of the new situation in terms of the old patterns. The white man, I suggest, became another item of the environment which could be exploited. However, in order to carry out this kind of exploitation the old band-land relationship was gradually abandoned and with it any real behavioral evidence of social unity. Working for the white man was an individual activity carried out without reference to the band. Gathering in the areas where native foods remained became a competitive enterprise rather than one in which an entire band could take part. The demands of white employers and the restrictions placed on travel by barbed wire, private property and American concepts of trespass disrupted the old cycle of movement and increased the fragmentation of Washo society.

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Only once, in the early 1900's when the pinenut range was threatened, the Washo were able to achieve enough unity to select a tribal chief to represent them. However, at his death the Washo were never able to agree on another chief. Modern field workers agree that the Washo appear to be singularly unable to agree on any unified action. Even the tribal council and other such modern innovations appear to be more focal points of suspicion and disunity than elements of cohesion.

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The Washo attitude toward the white man still seems to be one of avoidance and repressed hostility. In return, the white man treats the Washo as a nuisance and an outcast. This is in marked contrast to the attitude toward the Paiute, which is one of relative admiration for Indians who conform to the accepted and romanticized view of Indian behavior.

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The Paiute direction of change appears to have been two-fold. A greater tribal identity appears to have developed, partially because of the war bands and partially because of the reservation situation, which encouraged the Indians to live and act as a unit with responsible leaders. This increased identity has accompanied a continued political unification locally